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wall. It was not only the largest of its kind that I ever found, but was also the most finely dissected. It was fertile. I recently made the acquaintance of *Ophioglossum vulgatum* in its favorite haunt, a wet, mossy meadow.

Botrychium simplex has not before been reported from northeastern Connecticut. The height of this fern varies from small specimens of but an inch or even less in height (but fertile) to larger ones of from six to eight inches. It appears in early May, about two or three weeks later than *B. matricariaefolium*, and, of course, the spores ripen correspondingly later. The one station was a side-hill or bank, with a small brook at the base, in deciduous woods with a rich soil. An area of about fifteen square feet contained probably thirty to forty specimens. A few more were discovered not far from this colony and it is possible that a painstaking search among the dead leaves would have revealed still more. Other ferns growing near were *Polystichum acrostichoides*, *Athyrium acrostichoides*, *Adiantum pedatum*, and *Botrychium virginianum*.

Both *Botrychium matricariaefolium* and *B. simplex* usually wither and die before the middle of summer, the stipes appearing to decay first near the base, thus weakening them and causing the ferns to recline.—
ALAN W. UPHAM.

FERNS IN THE NEWS.—Every city has one or more newspapers which show a special interest in natural history to the extent of publishing frequently articles on plants and animals. In a recent issue of Science, Mr. Cosgrove, Sunday Editor of the New York World, wrote of the interest in science taken by his paper, and the care exercised to see that the articles should be scientifically accurate. This care for accuracy is really

a most significant indication of the type of reader to which a newspaper caters. Another New York paper, not noted for accuracy in any respect, published a year or so ago a whole page on carnivorous plants, in which, mixed with mainly accurate accounts of the small insectivorous sundew and Venus fly trap, there were included a photograph of a East Indian pitcher holding a dead rat, an obvious fake, and an artist's drawing with appropriate text, detailing an annual sacrifice of a young Indian woman (shown white in the picture!), to a man-eating plant of South America. To what grade of intelligence must this paper appeal?

The New York Evening Post has daily articles by "The Naturalist" as well as other nature stories, all reliably written. The story appended, reprinted by permission, is a good illustration. Apparently the Naturalist, man or woman, is familiar with Long Island, as the series includes frequent stories of Long Island bird observations and of coast-wise fish, as well as alternate stories of plants.

AN IRREPRESSIBLE FERN.

Neither fire, nor storm, nor flood can kill some plants, and one at least has come through the recent disastrous forest fires without a scratch. Bracken, or the common brake, certainly the most widely distributed fern in the world, is plentiful in the burned areas, and its new fronds are already coming up, Phoenix-like, among the dead ashes of the forest ruins.

So widely distributed is this largest of our local ferns, and such enormous growths does it make in some countries, that its extermination is necessary over vast tracts of grazing land. In New Zealand, for instance, where sheep grazing lands are valuable and hard to keep from invasion by worthless plants, a curious practice has grown up around the bracken. At the dry season hundreds of acres are fenced, set on fire, and then sheep are turned into them. The animals can only eat the young, succulent shoots, as the mature growth, as in our native representatives, is hard and wiry. Just the right number of sheep are turned in so that "fern crushing" is complete and forage grasses get a chance to grow. The operation

is widely followed in New Zealand, where bracken is even more common than it is here. Locally it is more plentiful in dry, rather sandy regions than elsewhere, and it often makes great, branching fronds over four feet high, the stalks of which are hard, black, and wiry.

In Normandy and Brittany, bracken, the cut-off stem of which simulates a holy symbol, has for ages been used by the peasants to ward off witches from their pastures. And at least one book on religious botany says that its fresh foliage was used, among innumerable other "cradle grasses," to line the cradle at Bethlehem.

Another news article, from a Syracuse paper, tells of a local fern garden with fifty-two species harbored in a back yard at one time, most of them from Onondaga County woods. Francis B. Gregory, of 725 East Willow St., is the fern grower. Other Syracuse fern students may be interested to make his acquaintance.

WHAT FERNS SHOULD BE PROTECTED IN YOUR STATE?—In New York state, the Vermont list might well be duplicated, as far as the same species occur with us. Of course we should add the hart's tongue, and the climbing fern of which records exist, though it may be too late to save the latter. *Asplenium montanum* and *Cheilanthes lanosa* would also demand protection; also the rarer botrychiums, though the commercial plant seller would scarcely be an enemy of these, only the thoughtless botanical collector. Again I refer to the Vermont list published in the preceding issue of the Fern Journal, to cover *Dryopteris Goldiana*, and others sufficiently prized by the plant sellers to be in danger. Have I left out any others?—R. C. B.

The third of a note-worthy series of plant exhibits was held by the Massachusetts Horticultural Society in